



CASPIAN
SCHOOL OF ACADEMICS

Procedure 2.4

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT PROCEDURE

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Academic Misconduct

Academic Governance and Standards Management

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Initial statement

The School aims to maintain quality standards in terms of course delivery and services provided. The purpose of this procedure is to establish clear School guidance for teachers, students and other staff members on the issue of academic misconduct. This Procedure should be read in conjunction with Procedure 4.10. Any suspicions as to originality of work, including through 'essay factories' will be further investigated, and work will be called forward for a viva.

Introduction

This procedure is designed to deal with allegations of Academic Misconduct for students enrolled on courses of study at CSA. The procedure will not apply to students registered on courses of study where CSA is not directly responsible for undertaking the assessment of students

In terms of this procedure, Academic Misconduct includes Plagiarism, Collusion and other forms of malpractice by students during the assessment process. This includes the submission of assignments which have been purchased or downloaded from 'exam writing' websites or for representing the work of another individual as the student's own work.

This procedure will be subject to an annual review.

UK Quality Code Expectations and Principles of particular relevance are:

- Assessment
- Enabling Student Achievement
- External Expertise
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Student Engagement

Plagiarism

Plagiarism may be defined as: "Stealing material from another source and passing it off as own work" (Park, 2003) Plagiarism is therefore, the theft or appropriation of someone else's work without proper acknowledgement and presenting the materials as if they were one's own. At the Caspian School a 0% plagiarism tolerance policy is followed. Plagiarism is a serious academic offence and the consequences are severe.

Plagiarism is explained fully during Induction. It is especially important for students to become aware of plagiarism in all its styles and dimensions, for a very specific reason. Deliberate plagiarism is regarded as a serious act of academic misconduct. Please see the Academic Malpractice Policy for a full list of consequences of plagiarism.

Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing means putting someone else's ideas into your own words without properly crediting or citing the original author. As a result, paraphrasing is a form of plagiarism if your text is too close to the original wording even where the source has been cited.

Collusion

Collusion is where students work together to complete an assessment that should be taken independently. Talking to friends and peers about a topic is a valuable way to improve understanding and support learning. However, there is a line between working collaboratively, or in cooperation, and collusion.

False Authorship & use of artificial intelligence (AI)

False authorship occurs when a student is not the author of the work they have submitted, and therefore is a form of plagiarism. The false authorship may be the result of a student engaging with a third party and/or software tool to complete an assessment, either for the whole of the assessment or parts of the work submitted. This engagement can be direct or through a platform. This may include work produced by:

- another student,
- an essay mill,
- a family member or friend,
- a tutoring service or
- the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) software (e.g., Generative Pre-trained Transformer (ChatAI, GPT-3/Chatbot), Megatron-turning Natural Language Generation (MT-NLG), ChatBot and Wordtune).

Use of answers by tutoring services, essay mills and platforms such as ChatGPT is False Authorship. As it is the authorship of work that is called into question, there is no requirement to prove that the work has been purchased.

The submission of work which is either generated and/or improved by language model software for the purposes of gaining marks will be regarded as False Authorship and seen as an attempt to gain an intentional unfair academic advantage.

The procedure

All assignment-based assessments and similar student work will be submitted through Turnitin software and carefully reviewed by teaching staff for evidence of plagiarism

In ALL cases tutors will mark the submitted assignment in the normal manner and will pass an un-moderated mark to the Programme Leader or their nominee. Tutors will have access to the first page of the Turnitin Originality Report but must mark the work in the normal manner. A tutor does not have the power to award a 'Fail' grade on the assumption that plagiarism or some other form of malpractice has occurred. The assignment may then be internally verified using the process set out in the Procedure 4.5: Guide to assessment and internal verification.

Under no circumstances should a teacher make a comment relating to allegations of academic misconduct on the feedback sheet attached to the assignment. Where academic misconduct is believed to have occurred, the teacher must complete a separate report and send this to the Principal, clearly identifying the nature of any allegation.

The Originality Report obtained through Turnitin will inform the marking process as follows:

- where the match is 25% or less the assessment will be marked without regard to any additional malpractice regulations.
- where the match is greater than 25% the assessment will be marked using normal academic criteria such as consideration of appropriate text to statutory regulations and other regulatory guidance or other official sources.
- where a student has a score in excess of 30% and over 50% the Turnitin report will be scrutinised and considered for poor referencing as well as evidence of plagiarism. Evidence that scores are not a result of referencing to key policies, reference points and documents will be referred, and a letter issued notifying the student of the malpractice.
- Assessed work which exceeds 50% will automatically be referred to the Programme Leader to review the nature of similarities and may have grades reduced or be failed as a result of plagiarism, depending on the level and nature of similarities. In the case of grade reduction, students will be sent a letter related to the offence and warning about the consequences of further offences in line with the awarding body academic regulations.

When an allegation of academic misconduct is received by the Principal, a formal letter will be sent to the student containing the following:

- details of the alleged offence
- a copy of the procedure on academic misconduct
- an invitation to attend a meeting of an investigatory panel, with the right to be accompanied by a witness or friend
- an invitation to provide a written response to the allegation, should the student not wish to attend the panel meeting

If the investigatory panel finds the student not to be guilty of the allegation(s) of academic misconduct, then the original verified/moderated grade for the assignment will stand. The allegation of misconduct will be removed from the student's record.

Penalties for confirmed cases of academic misconduct will be applied as follows:

Official warning letter

This will apply where the panel finds that the student was guilty of poor academic practice (for example, poor or inadequate referencing) but had not deliberately set out to deceive the assessor. The mark awarded will stand. If the original grade was a fail the student will be entitled to re-assessment.

Fail and first official warning

This will apply to students who have committed a first offence but where the offence is considered to be minor or an allegation of plagiarism was not fully supported by evidence. Students will be permitted to re-submit the assignment but, where appropriate/possible, the mark will be capped at Pass.

Fail and final official warning

This will apply to first offences and second or subsequent offences where serious plagiarism is confirmed. In such cases the panel will determine whether or not the student should be given the opportunity for re-assessment. Where re-assessment is permitted the mark will be capped at Pass.

Exclusion from the unit/module or programme

This will apply:

- to a second or third proven case of plagiarism in the same module/unit;
- where a student has submitted an assignment which he/she has not prepared
- where a student is found guilty of academic misconduct during a time-constrained examination.

The investigatory panel will meet as required to review cases of alleged academic misconduct. Recommendations made by the panel will be ratified by the next meeting of the Academic Board.

Students will have the right to appeal to an external Academic Adjudicator against the findings of the panel. The external Academic Adjudicator will be appointed by, but wholly independent of the School. The decision made by the Academic Adjudicator will be binding on the student and the School. There will be no further right of appeal unless permitted by the appropriate Awarding Body.

Key principles

The School is committed to ensuring that accurate and legitimate procedures take place in its day to day academic routine.

Cheating in examinations or in other assignments assessed for the award of a certificate, or diploma is a kind of fraud. A student who copies other people's work is passing off something as their own when it belongs in reality to someone else. A qualification is awarded when a person has achieved a certain body of knowledge and acquired certain high level skills. If the student had not actually gained that knowledge or could not use those skills, because in fact s/he had misled the assessors about the extent of her/his accomplishment, then the qualification could not be treated by employers or others as a

reliable indicator. As a consequence, the award would be devalued for all those who had earned it honestly.

For these reasons, the School has a duty to all its students and to its awarding organisations to ensure that all certificates and diplomas are earned by students by their own efforts, not by cheating. Consequently, penalties will be rigorously enforced for any student who commits an act of academic misconduct.

The School will ensure that:

- staff members are briefed on induction regarding the definition of malpractice and maladministration
- all staff members are notified regarding the consequences that they may have to bear as a result of malpractice / maladministration
- all academic and non-academic procedures are followed by all staff members at all times
- suitably qualified personnel have been dedicated for the job role
- all staff members abide by the General Data Protection Regulations
- examination security is maintained at all times
- organisational channels are followed for communication
- only legitimate certificate / award claims are made for deserving students; claims must be approved by the Principal

Implementation and monitoring responsibilities

The Principal is responsible for the implementation of this procedure.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – letter inviting a student to come to an Academic Misconduct review meeting

Appendix 2 – letter informing a student of the outcome of the Academic Misconduct meeting

Appendix A

CONFIDENTIAL

[Students name and address]

[Date]

Dear [Students name]

Course and Module:

I am writing to inform you that the Programme staff suspect that academic misconduct has occurred in the above module in relation to coursework that you have recently submitted. Please attend a meeting at CSA to be held on:

Date:

Time:

Place:

CSA and the awarding body defines academic misconduct as any action(s) or behaviour likely to confer an unfair advantage in assessment, whether by advantaging a candidate for assessment or disadvantaging (deliberately or unconsciously) another or others.

Examples of such misconduct include the submission of material (written, visual or oral), originally produced by another person or persons or oneself, without due acknowledgement, so that the work could be assumed to be the student's own, or the submission of work produced in collaboration for an assignment based on the assessment of individual work. (Such misconduct is typically described as plagiarism and collusion.)

The purpose of this meeting and the academic misconduct procedure can be found in the Student Handbook and more information is available from the Assessment Officer on request.

You are entitled to be accompanied at the meeting by a friend and you may also wish to seek the guidance of the Student Council. If you fail to attend the meeting, any reasons advanced for non-attendance will be considered and the proceedings may be adjourned to a later date. If no reasons are advanced, or if they are judged invalid, the meeting will conclude that you have admitted academic misconduct and will issue you with an Academic Misconduct Warning (see our Academic Misconduct Regulations). Please confirm that you will be attending this meeting.

Yours sincerely,

[Name of Programme Coordinator]

Tel:

Email:

Cc.

Appendix B

CONFIDENTIAL

[Students name and address]

[Date]

Dear [Students name]

Course & Module:

Further to the Academic Misconduct Meeting held on *[date]*, I write to confirm that your behaviour in the above module was contrary to the Academic Misconduct Regulations and that this letter constitutes an Academic Misconduct Warning.

The effect of this warning is that the piece of work concerned will be awarded a mark of 0% . Provided that you have not exhausted your assessment opportunities, you will be permitted to resubmit the piece of work in question but your mark will be capped at 40%/Pass. As this will also count as reassessment within the module, the component mark for the Module will also be capped to a pass mark.

This matter is now closed, but you should:

- ensure that you familiarise yourself with the academic conventions of referencing, before you submit further work for assessment (you should refer to the Referencing Guide which can be found on the VLE
- (b) read the guidance on plagiarism in your programme handbook and student handbook;
- (c) seek advice from either your lecturer or Course Manager if you are unsure of the rules;
- (d) note that any future academic misconduct on your part is likely to lead to a serious penalty.

Yours sincerely,

Programme Leader.

Tel:

Email:

Cc: